

Day of Event Tips for Businesses

1. **Make sure your business remains open during the event.** You can't make a sale if you aren't open. Show event attendees that you are supportive of downtown and that downtown is a great place to be and shop.
2. **Attract attendees to your store.** Maybe you could have a sidewalk sale table offering items that complement the special event. If your business doesn't carry items that complement the event, just moving some of your regular merchandise outside can bring attention to your shop.
3. **Have a special in-store sale or specials only the day of the event (or even during the hours of the event if appropriate).** Provide such good deals that on selected food or merchandise that it's worthwhile for people to come inside. You could also have a contest to get more information about people attending the event. Just having participants fill out a piece of paper with their name, address, phone number email and birth date. This will give you important information that can add these people to your mailing list (or begin one). Also, if you get their birth date you can send them a simple birthday card.
4. **Offer "just looking" coupons.** Hand them out to customers who are browsing in your store and invite them to come back.
5. **Offer to hold customers' purchases for them.** Some people won't buy something the day of an event because they don't want to have to carry them around. This service can alleviate this concern and is a great way to show responsive customer service.
6. **Have an open house or in-store demonstration during the event.** This is a great way for service-related businesses to introduce themselves to the public.
7. **Pay attention to the "curb appeal" of your business.** Sweep outside, clean windows, and keep walkways free of clutter (unless you are having a sidewalk sale). Inside, make sure the business is clean, well-lit, and add some inexpensive extras like flowers or balloons.
8. **Build your mailing list.** Use the opportunity to get names and contact information from event attendees. This will allow you to communicate directly and inexpensively throughout the year with your customers. This is also a great time to add people to your social media marketing, so encourage them to "like" your store or start following you on Instagram or Twitter.
9. **Follow up and stay in contact.** After you collect contact information from people who visited during an event, reach out to them even if they didn't buy anything during the event. In today's world this is easy and inexpensive. Electronic newsletters, social media, and email are all ways you can let people know what is going on with your business, let them know about upcoming events, and even conduct surveys to see what products they would like you to carry.
10. **Be part of planning other events.** Special events don't just happen by themselves, they take months of planning and many volunteers. If you are part of the planning, you have direct input on how events can be structured to better meet the needs of downtown business owners.
11. **Keep at it!** Not every promotional idea will work for every business every time. Try different things, and then keep what works and get rid of what doesn't. Always come up with new ideas.